

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 16, 1997 LB 686

that. We don't know what's going to happen, but we don't want you to take a precaution because that which you're taking a precaution against may not happen. But then if you ask the direct question, you say it may not happen, but now I ask you, is it possible that it may happen? And the answer will be, well, yes, it may happen. So why, then, if something which can harm the public may happen, why should we not take precautions against it. This whole bill is something that we're being asked to take on faith and swallow as it is being presented to us. When Senator Jones and others from the rural areas have this bill create a negative impact, there will be people who will ask him and other senators from the rural area, how did you let this happen? Why did you let this happen? Why did you not inform us and why does the record not show that you fought for our interest? It has the appearance, our debate, of moving in the direction that the industry wants. I don't think an amendment has been added to this bill. I believe Senator Kristensen is being completely frank when he says that he will look at some of the amendments that have been offered, but to look at it doesn't mean the same as supporting it and advocating its adoption. Let's say that LB 686 were to pass just like it appears in the green copy of the book, what could you tell your constituents that this bill means, and what could you tell them it's going to do to them and their phone rates? You'd have to say, I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. However many questions they ask you, you would give that many I don't know in response, because the way the bill is written, you have no way of knowing. We don't even know how many people will be on this advisory board because it is written to allow a wide range in terms of the total number of people who will be on that board. If you take a lower end of the number, the industry, at best, would have one fewer than the number it would take to be equal to all of the others. In other words, the other side will have one more person in their total number makeup...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...than the industry would have, but if you push it to the top end, meaning 15 members, then the industry has an absolute majority. They have eight, and at most the other side would have seven. So even on things where we can assign numbers, this bill has chosen not to do it. Everything